

northwestern university
DEPARTMENT OF ART HISTORY

Quarter/Year	Course Number	Day/Time	Instructor
Spring 2020	ART-HIST 350-2	TR 12:30-1:50	Eisenman
Course Title			Degree/Distro Fulfillment
19 th Century Art 2: 1848-1900			1800-present



The fifty-year period from 1850 to 1900 spans both the birth of European modernism and its first period of crisis. Following the worldwide year of revolution (1848) insurgent forces, appeared in the artistic no less than the political arena. They demanded the abolition or reorganization of the conservative academies of art with their restrictive jury systems. They rejected the idea of artistic subservience to wealthy or powerful patrons, insisting that the first responsibility of artists is to themselves and their imaginations. And they preferred to depict the popular classes - their struggles as well as their heroism - instead of the established cannon of stories from ancient history and myth, or the Christian bible. There were many artistic radicals in this period, but we will focus on just a few, including

Gustave Courbet, Honore Daumier, Francois Millet and Edouard Manet in France and the Pre-Raphaelites in England. By the end of the century, a different crisis arose. The modernists had so far dominated the scene, that the risk arose that audiences would be left behind. So thoroughly had Symbolist artists such as Redon, Gauguin, Hodler, Van Gogh, Ensor and Munch rejected traditional subjects, that their work was becoming almost incomprehensible to audiences. Even erstwhile Impressionists such as Monet, Degas and Cezanne confronted a crisis: Would they follow their own, creative and interrogative path wherever it led them, or would they retreat to more solid ground, surrendering the very idea of progress and experimentation? These are among the questions the course will address.

Required Textbooks	Assessments
19th C Art - A Critical History, 5th Edition, Thames and Hudson. Art in Theory: 1815-1900, edited by Charles Harrison, Paul Wood and Jason Gaiger, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001	Midterm, Final Exam, short research paper.